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ABSTRACT

The exhibition, "Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy," consists of approximately 200 objects drawn from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities collection of fine and decorative arts. Each item in the exhibition has been selected for its ability to tell a story and to place the history of that item within the larger history of the region and the nation. This educator's resource guide is designed to help teachers make the most of a visit to the exhibition. The guide allows teachers to focus on specific themes within the exhibition that relate to their classroom teaching. Five thematic sections give students a view of different time periods in U.S. history, while simultaneously introducing them to the techniques historians use to collect and preserve that history. The themes are: "Everyone's History Matters: Family Treasures"; "Tales of the Revolution: Great Stories from the Past"; "Neoclassicism: Old Symbols for a New Republic"; "Fighting for Freedom: Slavery and New England"; and "People and Portraits". Each section includes background information for teachers on two objects, as well as other related objects to look for in the exhibition. It provides discussion questions, ideas for hands-on activities, and bibliographies. The first page of each section provides an overview, a list of lesson objectives, and a summary of subject areas, skills, and topics covered in the section. (BT)

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Cherished Possessions

A New England Legacy

A Traveling Exhibition from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

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Educator's Resource Guide

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Cherished Possessions

A New England Legacy

A Traveling Exhibition from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

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Educator's Resource Guide

Written by
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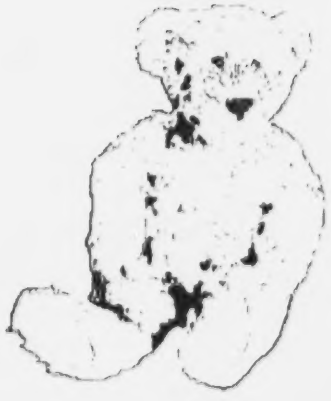
Nancy Carlisle, Curator of Collections

Images courtesy of SPNEA
Photography by Peter Harholdt



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Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

Dear Educator,

This Educator's Resource Guide is designed to help you make the most of a class visit to the exhibition, *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy.* Drawn from the collections of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), the exhibition includes a wide variety of objects, including furniture, photographs, paintings and textiles, and explores more than 300 years of New England history. This resource guide allows teachers to focus on specific themes within the exhibition that relate to their classroom teaching.

Five thematic sections give students a view of different time periods in American history, and simultaneously introduce students to the techniques historians use to collect and preserve that history. The themes are:

- Everyone's History Matters: Family Treasures
- Tales of the Revolution: Great Stories from the Past
- Neoclassicism: Old Symbols for a New Republic
- Fighting for Freedom: Slavery and New England
- People and Portraits

Teachers may wish to focus on one particularly relevant theme, or string several themes together to give students an overview of the exhibition. Each section includes background information for teachers on two objects, as well as other related objects to look for in the exhibition. In addition, discussion questions, ideas for hands-on activities, and bibliographies are provided. They may be used to prepare students for their visit or for further study back in the classroom after the field trip. All materials have been written in connection with the National Standards For History published by the National Center for History in the Schools.

Please let us know what you think about these materials by completing the evaluation form at the end of this section. We also welcome your ideas and stories about how you have used the materials in your classroom.

Contact us at:

Education Department
SPNEA
141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

or BostonEd@spnea.org

About the Exhibition

Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy consists of approximately 200 objects drawn from SPNEA's collection of fine and decorative arts. Each item in the exhibition has been selected for its ability to tell a story and to place the history of that item within the larger history of the region and the nation. History often focuses on the stories of the wealthy and famous, the politicians and the privileged. SPNEA's exhibition touches on these stories, but also highlights the uniqueness of the objects used daily by the everyday citizen. Thanks to New Englanders' penchant for retaining family objects that tell tales, more than 300 years of New England history are evident in the items in the exhibition.

The exhibition will travel to the following venues:

Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine
July 16, 2003–October 26, 2003

Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas
June 12–August 22, 2004

Honolulu Academy of Fine Arts, Honolulu, Hawaii
September 29, 2004–January 2, 2005

Bard College Graduate Center, New York
March 2–May 29, 2005

Public Museum of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, Michigan
June 22–October 2, 2005

New England's History is America's History

The six contiguous states that make up New England — Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont — take up less space than one-quarter of the state of Texas. However, New England's place in the American psyche is substantial. Known for its picturesque beauty and historical character, New England was the home of Pilgrims and Puritans, the Salem Witch Trials, the first rumblings of American Independence, and the first battle of the Revolution. The Industrial Age sprang up on the banks of New England rivers, and groundbreaking social movements, promoting the rights of women and blacks, found a firm foundation in New England. All of these events influenced the nation we live in today.

We can also learn from those New Englanders whose stories did not end up in the pages of a history book. Tracing lives of everyday citizens over time demonstrates the tremendous changes that have occurred in American society over the last four hundred years, from the subsistence lifestyles of the early settlers to the remarkable age of technology that we live in today.

We hope that no matter what region of the country you live in, you will find the themes and resources in this Educator's Guide useful in sharing our nation's history and culture with your students.

About SPNEA

Founded in 1910 to protect New England's cultural and architectural heritage, SPNEA is an internationally known museum and national leader in preservation, research, and innovative programming. SPNEA collects and preserves buildings, landscapes, and objects dating from the seventeenth century to the present and uses them to keep history alive and to help people develop a deeper understanding and enjoyment of New England life and an appreciation for its preservation.

Headquartered in Boston, SPNEA owns and operates 35 historic sites in five New England States. These carefully preserved buildings and landscapes tell the stories of the people who have called New England home over the past three centuries. For more information, visit our website: www.SPNEA.org.

About the materials

A few notes to help you use the Educator's Resource Guide:

- The first page of each section provides an overview, a list of lesson objectives, and a summary of subject areas, skills, and topics covered in the section.

- Connections to the National Standards for History published by the National Center for History in the schools appear towards the end of each section. The standards may be found at http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/nchs/standards/.

- Underlined words are defined in each section's Glossary section.

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Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

Educator's Resource Guide Evaluation

Your opinions are important to us! Please let us know what you think about the materials provided in this binder.

You may submit feedback in the following ways:

By Mail:
Education Department
SPNEA
141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114-2702

By Fax:
617- 227-9204

By Email:
BostonEd@spnea.org

Educator Name (optional): _____

School: _____

Subject and Grade taught: _____

Did you visit *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy* with your students? If so, when? At what museum?

Where did you get a copy of the Educator's Resource Guide?

- ❑ From SPNEA *(printed copy)*
- ❑ From another museum *(printed copy)* Name of museum: _____
- ❑ From a website *(PDF)* website: _____

Which section(s) of the Educator's Resource Guide did you use? Please check all that apply.

- ❑ Everyone's History Matters: Family Treasures
- ❑ Tales of the Revolution: Great Stories from the Past
- ❑ Neoclassicism: Old Symbols for a New Republic
- ❑ Fighting for Freedom: Slavery and New England
- ❑ People and Portraits
- ❑ None

Please describe how you used the resource guide to integrate *Cherished Possessions* into your classroom teaching:

Did the materials connect to your curriculum? If so, how?

Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate answer.

The sections I chose to use from the resource guide were appropriate for the age and abilities of my students.

Agree **Disagree**

Comments:

The directions in the resource guide were clear.

Agree **Disagree**

Comments:

My students were more engaged by the exhibition because of the materials in the resource guide.

Agree **Disagree** **Did not visit the exhibition**

Comments:

The National History Standards Connections were useful.

Agree **Disagree** **Did not look at them**

Comments:

The Skills/Subjects/Topics Charts in each section were useful.

Agree **Disagree** **Did not look at them**

Comments:

What more would you want to see in the Educator's Resource Guide? Please continue on the reverse if necessary.

1 Everyone's History Matters:
Family Treasures

2 Great Stories from the Past:
Tales of the Revolution

3 Neoclassicism:
Old Symbols for a New Republic

4 Fighting for Freedom:
Slavery and New England

5 People and Portraits

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Everyone's History Matters: Family Treasures

What do a box of ancient bread and a lucky chest of drawers have in common? Both served as important reminders of the past to the families that owned them. In this section, students examine objects that belonged to families, well-known and average alike, who believed that their family history was worth preserving.

Students:

- interpret historical objects in order to learn about the past, drawing on observation and deduction skills.
- describe how families have used "cherished possessions" to remember their past and pass stories on to future generations.
- discuss the ways that objects speak to us about the past and that their stories tell us about the people who owned them.

SUBJECT AREAS	American History
	Using Primary Sources
SKILLS	Analyzing Historical Objects
TOPICS TO EXPLORE	Colonial Period
	Family History
	Collecting
	Preservation

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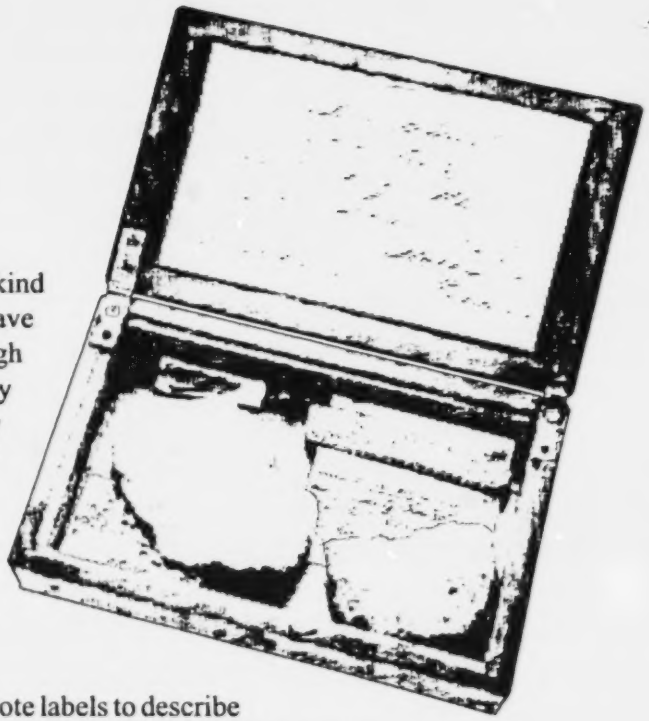
Relic Box

John Clapp (1764– ?)
Dorchester, Mass., 1835
Mahogany
Gift of Anne Pierce Shaughnessy



This relic box is an unusual example of the kind of objects that families all over the world have used to preserve their own histories through the generations. Gathered together by descendants of the Pierce Family in the early nineteenth century, these unlikely family treasures include two pieces of petrified bread, a corn cob, and a piece of Connecticut's famed Charter Oak. Why would the Pierce family preserve these things?

Over the years, Pierce family descendants wrote labels to describe the objects and their connections to their family history. John Clapp wrote in 1835:

> *This box contains two biscuits and a cob of corn, kept for many years by John Pierce, of Dorchester, son of Thomas and Mary, grandson of Robert and Agnes [sic], who died, 27 January 1744, aged 75 years, 3 month, and 1 day.*
> *Made by John Claps [sic] in the 72 year of his age, a descendant of the above named Robert Pierce; to preserve these Relics of Antiquity.*
> *Sept. 29, 1835*

Thirty years later, on the Fourth of July, a second cousin covered over Clapp's label with one of his own, which read:

> *This Bread was brought to this Country from England in the Year 1630, and has been kept by my Ancestors and myself.*
> *Lewis Pierce*
> *Dorchester*
> *July 4, 1865*

Although scholars now believe that the bread may not date back as far as Pierce family descendants thought, the story that it was saved by the first Pierces to come to America from England (on a ship called the *Mary and John)* was an important family legend. The corn cob was used as a tool for shelling corn by Colonel Samuel Pierce, a family member who fought in

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the Revolutionary War. Like many New England families, the Pierces strove to commemorate their family's role in the formation of the new nation.

Relics like this one were especially popular in the nineteenth century when John Clapp and Lewis Pierce wrote their labels. They took on a quasi-religious significance – they were eyewitnesses to important moments in the country's history, or, like the Pierce relics, marked a family's rootedness in the past.

The Pierces, although they were not extremely wealthy or famous, saw the importance of preserving the ongoing story of their family. In addition to this relic box, they worked hard to preserve other family treasures, including furniture and family documents, and they lived in the same seventeenth-century house in Dorchester, Massachusetts, for ten generations.

High Chest of Drawers

Decoration possibly by Robert Davis or
Stephen Whiting
Boston, Mass., 1735–1745
Red maple, red oak, white pine
Gift of Edmund Quincy

Like the Pierces, the Quincys were a Boston-area family with an interest in preserving their family history. In the nineteenth century, Eliza Susan Quincy engaged in a lifelong project to record as much as she could about her family members, who included political and military leaders, a president of Harvard University and two mayors of Boston. The family could also claim a connection to the prominent Adams and Hancock families through marriage. Eliza Susan Quincy collected objects that belonged to her ancestors, recorded family stories, and documented her family home in Quincy, Massachusetts.[1]

This high chest was a family treasure that Eliza Susan Quincy cherished greatly. Considered highly stylish when her great-grandfather, Josiah Quincy I purchased it in the mid-eighteenth century, it is decorated with images of mythical creatures, buildings, birds and plants, using a technique called "japanning," which imitates Asian lacquer.

What makes the high chest particularly remarkable is that it escaped two fires. In 1759, it was rescued from a fire in the Quincys' Braintree, Massachusetts, house. In 1769, fire destroyed a second house, and again the chest was saved. Eliza Susan Quincy recorded this story, along with the names of all of the family members who had owned the chest, as she documented the family treasures in her home. (See the **Primary Source Document** at the end of this section.)

[1]See *Fighting for Freedom: Slavery in New England* to learn about another Quincy family artifact, and to learn about Eliza Susan Quincy's brother, Edmund, and her grandmother, Abigail Quincy.

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More Things to Look for in the Exhibition

Coat of Arms

Made for the Fayerweather family
Attributed to John Welch (1711–1789)
Boston, Masschusetts, ca. 1760
Painted wood
Bequest of Eleanor Fayerweather

This coat of arms, made for Thomas (1724-1805) and Sarah Hubbard Fayerweather (1730-1804) is part of a longstanding tradition among American families. Many people sought to distinguish themselves by associating their families with the system of heraldry popular in Europe since medieval times. Having a family crest in Europe indicated that a person held a high rank in society. Like many American families, the Fayerweathers adopted symbolism from the crests that they liked from other families. This piece probably commemorated Thomas and Sarah's marriage, and unites the crests of their families. On the left, the red lions and gold band represent Sarah's side, the Hubbards, while the blue background and gold stars of Thomas's family seem to be a pun on their last name (fair weather).

Teddy Bear

Owned by Susan Norton
America or Europe, 1906
Angora plush, sawdust stuffing
Bequest of Susan Norton

When she was four years old, Susan Norton (1902-1989) was photographed with this cherished toy on a family trip to Italy. More than eighty years later, in a home cluttered with family heirlooms and mementoes of travels around the world, the teddy bear was still carefully preserved.

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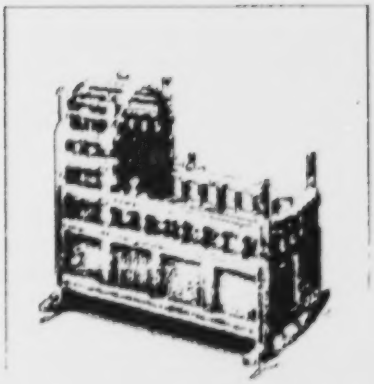
Cradle

Owned by the Thacher Family
Barnstable or Yarmouth, Massachusetts, ca. 1665–1685
Red oak, white pine
Gift of Dorothy Armour, Elizabeth T. Acampora, Hope Carter, Guido R. Perera, Henry C. Thacher, Louis B. Thacher, Jr., and Thomas C. Thacher



The person who built this cradle used sophisticated joinery techniques and decorations usually reserved for much larger and more important pieces of furniture. The cradle belonged to John Thacher (1639-1713), a prominent citizen of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. Thacher's parents had experienced great tragedy, which may explain the family's desire to have such a special piece of children's furniture. In August 1635, soon after arriving in the New World, members of the family including Thacher's parents, their four oldest children and some cousins sailed into a hurricane and met with disaster. All but Thacher's parents drowned. Eventually they had two more children, including John, but surely the pain of losing the four oldest weighed heavily on them. Perhaps, in a family that knew such loss, the birth of a child had special meaning — hence the care with which this cradle was made. Descendants preserved the cherished cradle for three hundred years.

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Glossary

Charter Oak: In 1687, twenty-five years after the colony of Connecticut received its charter from the British Crown, this oak tree served as a hiding place for the charter when representatives of James II tried to seize it back. The tree was over 500 years old at the time, and stood for another 150 years, until it was felled by lightning in 1856. The tree became an important symbol to Connecticut residents. Pieces of the tree, some carved into souvenirs, found their way into the collections of many New England families.

Japanning: A method of varnishing a surface in order to obtain a shiny finish that imitates Asian lacquer. Several layers of resin, often colored by minerals or other pigments, are applied to wood, metal, or glass, dried with heat, and polished. This technique was especially popular in England, France, Holland, and Spain in the seventeenth century, and provided an alternative to objects imported from Asia, which were very stylish at the time.

Joinery: Fine woodwork done by a carpenter or cabinetmaker.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to save objects? What do these objects reveal about a particular moment in history?

2. What can you learn about the Pierces and the Quincys by examining their family treasures? Why do you think these families chose to preserve these particular objects? What did they symbolize for the family members? What do they tell others about the families' pasts?

3. Ask students to read Eliza Susan Quincy's "Memorandum" about the High Chest (see **Primary Source Document**). Where and when did Josiah Quincy I (Colonel Quincy) purchase the chest? How many people owned it? How many households did it pass through before Eliza Susan brought it back to the house in Quincy?

4. Most of the objects in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition are family treasures that were preserved for their history. Find another object in the exhibition that you think is a good example of a family treasure and explain what it reflects about the family that owned it.

5. Does your family have a treasure? Describe something that has been passed down in your family through the generations, that connects you to the past. (For example, family photographs, quilts, favorite recipes, etc.) Do you own something new that should be preserved for the future? Why are these objects important to your family? What will these objects tell future generations about your family and life in general in our time?

6. John Clapp, Louis Pierce, and Eliza Susan Quincy all took part in preserving their families' treasures during the nineteenth century. What was it about this time period that made people so interested in collecting "relics" and seeking connections between themselves and important historical events? Why would Americans want to associate their families with the first settlers to come to the colonies, or events tied to the founding of the United States? What was happening in America in the nineteenth century that would make them yearn for this connection?

Activities

1. **Make your own relic box**
Choose something that you feel reflects your family's life today. It could be an object, a story, a photograph or a favorite recipe. Make a box to house your family treasure. Decorate the box with photos or other collage materials. Write a label to put on the box that describes the treasure's importance to you and your family. (*NOTE:* to ensure that your relic box lasts, try to use acid-free cardboard and paper for the box and all decorations.) Teachers may create a classroom exhibit of family relic boxes.

2. **Make Ship's Biscuit**
Members of the Pierce family believed that their early ancestors preserved the bread in the relic box from their journey from England to the New World. A special kind of bread, called "ship's biscuit" or "hardtack" was often used on long sea voyages, since it would keep for a long time. Try making your own ship's biscuit using the recipe on SPNEA's kids' page at http://www.spnea.org/kids/food/kids_food1700.htm .

3. **Create Your Own Family Crest**
We have seen how some families transformed functional objects into symbolic family treasures. Others created treasures that were purely symbolic from the beginning. Look for examples of family crests in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition, including the **Coat of Arms** that belonged to the Fayerweather family.

Create your own family crest. Traditional coats of arms incorporate a system of colors, designs and images that have symbolic meaning. Or you may make up your own set of symbols. Decide what kind of imagery and symbols you can include that says something about your family. You may want to consult books on heraldry at the library or research heraldic symbolism on the internet.

Suggested Reading

Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy.* Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003, pp. 26–27 (relic box), 30–33 (high chest), 34–35 (teddy bear), 90–92 (cradle), 136–137 (coat of arms). A

Chorzempa, Rosemary A. *Design Your Own Coat of Arms.* New York: Dover Publications, 1987. M

McGovern, Ann and Anna DeVito. *If You Sailed on the Mayflower in 1620.* New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1993. E

_____, and June Otani. *If You Lived in Colonial Times.* New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1993. E

Weitzman, David. *My Backyard History Book.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975. M E

E Elementary school level M Middle school level A High school and adult level

Connections to National Standards for History

<u>Grades K - 4</u>
Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities

Standards in History
Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago
Topic 2: The History of the Students' Own State or Region
Topic 3: The History of the United States

<u>Grades 5 - 12</u>
Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
4. Historical Analysis and Interpretation

U.S. History Standards
Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1583–1763)
Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s)
Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–1861)

Primary Source Document

Memorandum
by Eliza Susan Quincy, 1879
Massachusetts Historical Society
(Note: We now know that some of the information contained in this document is not completely accurate.)

The ornamental chest of drawers was purchased by Col. Josiah Quincy in 1748, either in England or Holland... This was his last visit to Europe and he brought to his house this chest of drawers and the large beveled mirror and the carved settee, now 1879, in the West Parlor.

This chest of drawers first stood in the house of Col. Quincy in Marlboro Street, at the corner of Central Court where his son J. Quincy Jr., was born, 1744. It was then removed to the house he purchased in Braintree, burnt 1759, when it was saved and removed to the farm house on the lower farm which he inherited from his father Judge Quincy. It was again saved when that house was burnt, 1769, and replaced in the house built by Col. Quincy 1770. – At his death in 1784 the furniture was left to the ladies of the family who decided between them and sold what they did not want. Mrs. Ann Quincy took this chest of drawers, the mirror with the ornament of three feathers, and a cherry tree table, made from a tree which grew on the farm. These three articles and others she took to Marlboro when she went to reside with her daughter, wife of Resort Packard. . . by whom they were inherited in 1805 on the death of Mrs. Ann Quincy. Mrs Packard removed from Marlboro to Lancaster after the death of her mother in 1805. In 1846 after her death, her daughter Ann, Mrs. Carter, wrote to us, asking if we would like to purchase these three articles, which we did, and they were brought to our house in Boston. They were hardly much improved by time and wear. We had the mirror new silvered and repaired, and the lining of the drawers of the chest removed and paint substituted for paper. And these are replaced then in the same places in the house in Quincy, from which they had gone in 1790, upward of 50 years before.

Relic Box
John Clapp (1764–?)
Dorchester, Mass., 1835
Mahogany
Gift of Anne Pierce Shaughnessy

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High Chest of Drawers
Boston, Mass., 1735–1745
Red maple, red oak, white pine
Gift of Edmund Quincy

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Great Stories from the Past: Tales of the Revolution

As we look back at major events in our nation's history, we enjoy hearing stories about the people who took part. Indeed, the stories of individuals, passed down through the generations help us to connect with the people, places, and events of the past.

In this section, students will examine objects from the time of the Revolutionary War that survived thanks to the stories associated with their owners. In doing so, students will discover the way stories can change over time, as individuals and groups adopt them for their own use. A post-visit activity on oral history techniques introduces students to the meticulous work a historian does in recording stories about the past.

Students:

- describe events of the Revolutionary War in relation to individuals who took part and the objects that they owned.
- interpret historical objects in relation to the historical narratives that are associated with them.
- conduct an oral history interview to record stories about the past.

Subject Areas	American History
	English Language Arts
Skills	Oral History
Topics to Explore	Revolutionary War
	Slavery & Abolitionism
	Roles of Women
	Race
	Stereotypes & Biases

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Teapot

Belonged to Crispus Atucks
Boston or England, 1740–1760
Pewter and wood
Gift of Miss S.E. Kimball through the Bostonian Society

This lowly teapot has been preserved through the centuries because it was said to belong to Crispus Attucks. Although we know little about his life, countless stories have been told recounting his death during the infamous Boston Massacre of March 5, 1770.

The Boston Massacre occurred after months of rising tension over the quartering of troops in the city, troops brought in to keep the peace in the wake of the hated Townshend and Stamp Acts. Rowdy young Bostonians frequently taunted the "Redcoats" and even threw snowballs at them. The soldiers responded and brawls often resulted. On March 5, things went a step further, when a group of brawlers, including Crispus Attucks, approached a sentry stationed outside the Customs House. As the sentry grew impatient with the taunting and jeering from the group, he lashed out and hit a boy nearby with his fist. The crowd became angry and began shouting. The sentry called for help and was soon joined by eight soldiers who tried to keep the crowd at bay. It is still not known who, if anyone, gave the order to fire, but within moments Attucks and three other townsmen were dead, another lay dying, and several others were seriously wounded.

This tragic situation soon became a rallying point for colonial patriots, who spun the somewhat confusing story to their own advantage, portraying the British as murderers and the Americans as martyrs. The fact that the event came to be known as a "massacre" when a small number of men died demonstrates the patriots' influence. Soon broadsides and pamphlets circulated by the Sons of Liberty demanded the immediate arrest of the soldiers and the removal of troops from Boston. Paul Revere produced a famous engraving of the event, depicting not the clash of brawlers that occurred, but a group of armed soldiers taking aim at a peaceful citizenry.

In the trial of the six soldiers involved, countless eyewitnesses remembered the first person shot and killed during the Boston Massacre as Crispus Attucks, a six-foot, two-inch man of mixed race who was seen wielding a club and encouraging others to attack. Attucks's background is obscure. He seems to have been from the Framingham, Massachusetts area, born to an African father and Indian mother. An advertisement for a runaway slave that appeared in the Boston Gazette in 1750 indicates that Attucks was owned by the William Brown family of Framingham. It is unclear whether Attucks returned to live with the Browns, but some evidence, including the fact that they preserved his teapot, suggests that he did.

In the nineteenth century, black activists revisited the story of Crispus Attucks and strove to commemorate his role in American history. In recalling his story, they emphasized his race more than had the eighteenth-century witnesses, and portrayed him as a leader of the group that faced the British soldiers. They argued that if a black man could lead the charge in an event that sparked the war for American independence, then surely the blacks who were enslaved in the South deserved independence too. William Nell and other black abolitionists held annual Crispus Attucks Days. Speakers remembered him, and relics said to belong to Attucks were put on display. Activists petitioned to have a memorial built to Attucks in Boston, and after meeting some resistance, succeeded in 1888, when a monument was erected on the Boston Common.

A cup that belonged to Attucks was one of the objects displayed at Crispus Attucks Day in the 1850s. It, along with this teapot, descended in the family of William Brown, Attucks's former master. The family clearly took pride in their association with a participant in a major historical event, and kept his worn-out, dented belongings as a way to remember their own version of his story.

Gown

Massachusetts, 1780–1790
Printed linen
Gift of Ann Gilbert, Carol Bostock Kramer, Susan Bostock Goldstone, and Louise Bostock Lehman Sonneborn

Note: In order to keep this fragile gown well preserved and protected from damaging light, it will not appear at every exhibition venue. We invite educators to use the images in this packet to include it in their lessons.

Deborah Sampson Gannett, like Crispus Attucks, was another hero of the Revolutionary War period who has become larger than life through the stories that have been told about her. Born to a poor family in 1760 in Plympton, Massachusetts, she led a fairly average life with one exception. In 1782, Sampson dressed in men's clothing and enlisted in the Continental Army. After a failed attempt to join the Massachusetts militia as "Timothy Thayer," she tried again successfully, enlisting in the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment as "Robert Shurtleff."

Over the last two centuries, a variety of stories have been told about Deborah Sampson and her exploits as a soldier in the Revolution.[1] In some tales, Sampson avoided being detected as a woman when she was shot in the leg. Instead of allowing doctors to examine her, she excused herself and extracted the musket ball with a knife. In other stories, "Robert Shurtleff" was selected to guard Congress in Philadelphia or to deliver a message to General George Washington. Ultimately, Sampson fell ill with a fever, and her secret was discovered. She was honorably discharged by General Henry Knox at West Point in October 1783.

Upon returning to Massachusetts, Deborah Sampson married Benjamin Gannett, a farmer from Sharon, Massachusetts. She probably wore this gown, which may have been the nicest one she owned, at her wedding.[2] Her descendants held on to this reminder of their heroic ancestor until the late twentieth century, when they gave it to SPNEA.

While she may not have been the only woman to dress as a man in order to fight in the Revolutionary War, Sampson was one of the few to be discovered and remembered through stories. In fact, she took part in the making of her own legend, assisting Herman Mann in writing her memoirs, *Female review, or Memoirs of an American young lady,* in 1797. In the early nineteenth century, she toured the northeastern part of the country to address paying audiences about her experiences.

[1] The internet is one place to find a number of legends. For example, see http://www.canton.org/samson/.
[2] Nancy Carlisle, *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy* (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003), 196.

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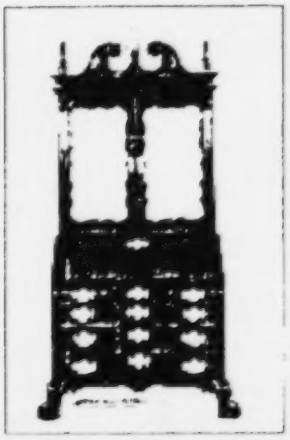
More Things to Look for in the Exhibition

Desk and Bookcase

Boston, Massachusetts, 1765–1775
Mahogany, white pine
Gift of Mrs. Charles F. Batchelder, Jr.



A paper label attached to the side of a drawer explains the story of this desk. When the British troops took control of Boston during the Revolutionary War, William Foster took his family from their home to a farm he owned in Brighton. Before leaving the house, he made chalk marks on several pieces of furniture that he left behind. After the British evacuated Boston, he returned to find the desk missing. He found it at the Old Province House, which the British officers had used as a headquarters. The chalk markings allowed Foster to prove his ownership.

Warming Pan

Probably Boston, Massachusetts, 1780–1790
Brass, maple, or birch
Gift of Bertram K. and Nina Fletcher Little

In the days before central heating, people used warming pans like this one to warm their beds, filling them with hot embers and passing them between bed clothes to remove the chill. This unusual warming pan bears an inscription: "*From the Townspeople / Patriot and Friend of Gen. Washington / Bell Tavern, Danvers, Massachusetts / Francis Symonds Esq., Innkeeper and Poet.*" Symonds's Bell Tavern served as a gathering place for supporters of the Revolutionary cause in Danvers, Massachusetts.

Glossary

Customs House: The building where duties or tolls were paid on goods entering or leaving the colonies. All major colonial ports had one.

Embers: Small, glowing pieces of coal, wood, or ash from a dying fire.

Sons of Liberty: A secret organization formed in Boston in 1765 by the American colonists to protest taxes imposed upon them by the British. Members often resorted to violence to achieve their goals.

Stamp Act: The first direct tax to be placed on the American colonies, this 1765 act required all newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents, commercial bills, advertisements, and other papers issued in the colonies, bear a stamp.

Townshend Act: In 1767 the British imposed new taxes on glass, lead, paints, paper, and tea imported to the American colonies in order to pay the colonial government's expenses. The act was named for Charles Townshend, British Chancellor of the Exchequer (treasurer).

Discussion Questions

1. Who was Crispus Attucks, and why is he remembered?

2. Why was Crispus Attucks's teapot kept through the centuries? What does it symbolize?

3. What has the story of Crispus Attucks meant through the years? How have different groups of people used his story to their own advantage? What did he mean to the colonial patriots of the Revolutionary era? To the abolitionists of the nineteenth century? To the Brown family?

4. Who was Deborah Sampson, and why is she remembered?

5. Why do you think Sampson's family kept her dress? Why did they give it to a museum?

6. In 1804, Paul Revere wrote a letter to Congress in support of Deborah Sampson's application for a military pension. In it, he wrote:

> *We commonly form our ideas of a person whom we hear spoken of whom we have never seen, according as their actions are described. When I heard her spoken of as a Soldier, I formed the idea of a tall, masculine female, who had a small share of understanding, without education & one of the meanest of her sex — When I saw her & discoursed with her I was agreeably surprised to find a small affeminite* [sic] *conversable Woman, whose education entitled her to a better situation in life.*[1]

What characteristics does Revere say he expected to find in Sampson? Why? How does he describe her? In fact, Sampson was 5'7", which is not terribly short for a woman. Why does Revere say that she is small?

What kind of "female" characteristics does Revere seem to value? What does this say about Americans' notions of an ideal woman at this time?

What is a stereotype? What is bias? Do you think Paul Revere subscribed to a stereotype about women? Why? How have our ideas about women's roles changed in the last 200 years? Is there any way in which they have remained the same? Are there any other groups of people in our society about whom stereotypes and biases still exist today?

[1] Paul Revere to William Eustis, Canton, Massachusetts, February 20, 1804, cited in Esther Forbes, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942), 433.

Activities

1. Game of Telephone.
As the legends of Crispus Attucks and Deborah Sampson show us, stories change over time as they are passed from one person to another. Demonstrate the way that this can happen by having students play the game of "Telephone." Students sit in a row, and one starts the game by whispering a sentence into the next person's ear. (The more complicated the sentence, the better the end result.) The students continue to pass the story from one person to the next. The person at the end of the row repeats the story out loud. How much has it changed? Why does it change so dramatically? What can be done to preserve one version of the story (eg. write it down, tape record it, etc.)?

2. Oral History Project
The objects we explore in this section (and most of the objects in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition) have important stories from the past attached to them. Have students explore stories from their own family's (or community's) history with this oral history project.

<u>Oral History: Background for Teachers</u>
Oral history is a way of recording information gained from people with firsthand knowledge of events. The goal of an oral historian is to recover these personal, previously unrecorded traces of the past and to convert them to a form that will make them useful to historians.

Oral histories have been collected for many centuries, and in some cultures the sharing of stories from one generation to the next is still the primary way that history is preserved. For social historians in the early twenty-first century, oral history is making a comeback. All kinds of people are interviewed about their lives and experiences. Their stories help us remember that "history" is not just the record of the rich and famous, but is made up of every person's experience, regardless of age, social status, gender, or race.

Good Interviewing Techniques

- Interview people at a time that is convenient for both parties.
- Explain the reason for the interview and the time frame involved.
- Prepare a topic and at least 15 sample questions ahead of time. The following are good topics for interviewing older family members about their youth:
  - Pastimes
  - Popular music and activities of the day
  - Military service
  - Clothing styles
  - The subject's hometown
- Use open-ended questions that require more of an answer than "yes" or "no." Open-ended questions might begin "Describe a time when...," "Tell me about..." or "How did you...?".
- Ask follow-up questions to clarify points and get more details.
- Come prepared with everything you need, and be sure to sit where you can write easily.
- Use paper, a tape recorder, or a video camera to record the interview. If you write, do not edit. Record exactly what was said.
- Clearly record your name and that of the interviewee, as well as the date and location of the interview for future reference.
- Thank the person for his or her time and information.
- Offer to show the speaker the final project.

We suggest *demonstrating and practicing* good interviewing techniques with students before they begin interviewing subjects. Try "fishbowling." Have two students sit facing each other in the middle of the class circle (fishbowl) and act out an interview on a topic. After five minutes, stop the interview and ask the other students to critique their methods. You may also use the **Oral History Worksheet** included at the end of this section to give students a chance to practice their interviewing skills in the classroom.

Student Project

Once students have learned oral history techniques, ask them to identify an older family member or community member whom they would like to interview. They might choose someone who has lived through a major historical event such as a war, the Great Depression, or the civil unrest of the 1960s. In any case, interviewing a member of another generation will provide students with insight into the past.

Ask students to write a summary of their interviews. What did they learn about historic events through the stories of people who witnessed them first-hand? Have students present their reports to the class or compile their work into an oral history binder for the classroom.

Suggested Reading

Adler, Jeanne Winston. *In the Path of War: Children of the American Revolution Tell Their Stories*. Peterborough, NH: Cobblestone Publishing Co., 1998. (M)

Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy*. Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003, pp. 22–25 (Attucks), 174–99 ("Revolution," including objects in this section). (A)

Bracken, Jeanne Munn. *Women of the American Revolution*. Carlisle, Mass.: Discovery Enterprises Limited, 1997. (A)

Green, Bob and D.G. Fulford. *To Our Children's Children: Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come*. New York: Doubleday, 1993. (A)

Kaplan, Sidney. *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*. Washington, D.C.: New York Graphic Society, Ltd., in association with the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1973. (A)

Lincoln, James and Chris Collier. *My Brother Sam is Dead*. New York: Scholastic, 2003. (M)

McGovern, Ann, Harold Goodwin and Katherine Thompson. *The Secret Soldier: The Story of Deborah Sampson*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1999. (E) (M)

Millender, Dharathula, and Gary Morrow. *Crispus Attucks: Black Leader of Colonial Patriots*. New York: Aladdin Library, 1986. (E)

Moore, Kay and Daniel O'Leary. *If You Lived at the time of the American Revolution*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1998. (E)

Rinaldi, Ann. *The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1993. (M)

Salmon, Marylynn. *The Limits of Independence: American Women 1760 - 1800*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. (A)

Sommer, Barbara W. and Ross E. Gray. *The Oral History Manual*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2003. (A)

Zobel, Hiller B. *The Boston Massacre*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1970. (A)

(E) Elementary school level (M) Middle school level (A) High school and adult level

Connections to National Standards for History

Grades K - 4

Historical Thinking Standards

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities
5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

Standards in History

Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago
Topic 3: The History of the United States

Grades 5 - 12

Historical Thinking Standards

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation (1)
4. Historical Analysis and Interpretation (2)
5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

U.S. History Standards

Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s)
Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–1861)

Oral History Worksheet

Date:_____ Place:_____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Q: _____

_____

A: _____

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Q: _____

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A: _____

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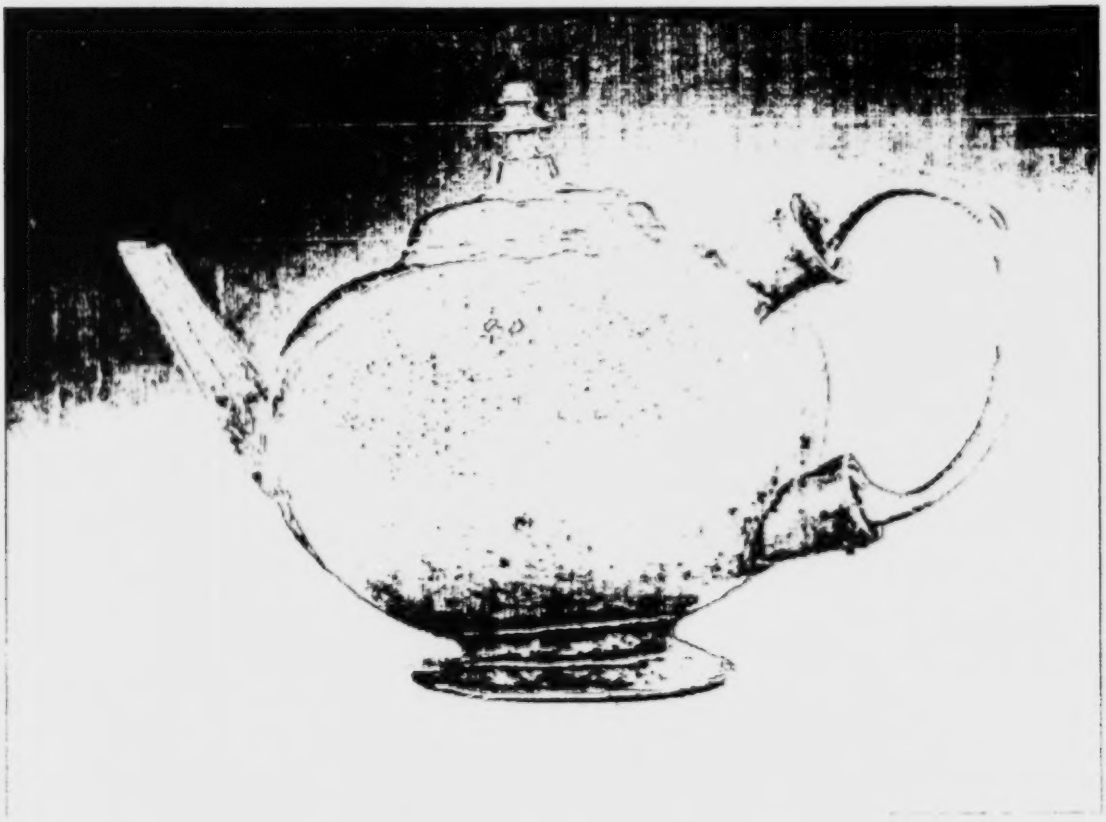

Teapot
Belonged to Crispus Attucks
Boston or England, 1740–1760
Pewter and wood
Gift of Miss S.E. Kimball through the
Bostonian Society.

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Gown
Massachusetts, 1780–1790
Printed linen
Gift of Ann Gilbert, Carol Bostock Kramer, Susan Bostock Goldstone, and Louise Bostock Lehman Sonneborn

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Neoclassicism: Old Symbols for A New Republic

After the American Revolution, a fervor for Neoclassicism dominated many aspects of life in major American cities like Boston. New architecture drew heavily on Roman building styles. Writers embraced the virtues of antiquity, and the new United States government borrowed its form and terminology from ancient Greece and Rome. Women wore clothing and hairstyles inspired by classical sculpture and paintings. Amazingly, these very ancient ideas came to embody the new direction that Americans sought to go in as they formed a new nation.

The neoclassical trend manifested itself in broad societal ideas and large buildings erected for public purposes, but it also found a place in many American homes by the early nineteenth century. In this section, students examine the decorative motifs with which early Americans filled their environments, and seek connections to the broader artistic, social, and political contexts of the period.

Students:

- define the characteristics of Neoclassicism, and understand the factors that inspired Americans to adopt this style as they built a new nation.
- identify classical elements and symbols used by Americans at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and explain their meaning.

Subject Areas	American History
	Art & Art History
	Civics
	Classical History
Skills	Analyzing Images
Topics to Explore	The New Nation
	Symbolism
	Community History

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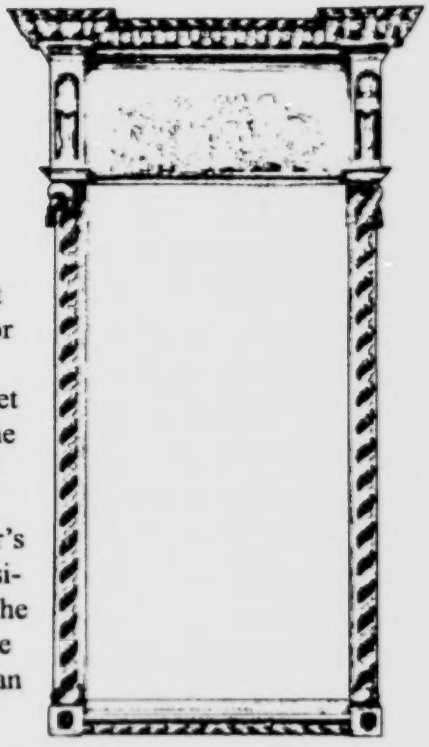
Pier Mirror



One of a pair
Probably John Doggett (1780–1857)
Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1807
White pine, gesso, gilt, paint, glass
Museum purchase with funds provided by an anonymous gift

This mirror matches the description of a piece sold to Boston merchant John Osborn by craftsman John Doggett in 1807. The mirror would have been a smart purchase for Osborn, since its classical styling and imagery were the height of fashion in Boston. Close to seven-and-a-half feet tall, it is surrounded with decorative motifs drawn from the ancient world. A classical scene across the top represents an episode from the Trojan War that would have been familiar to well-educated Americans who had read Homer's *Iliad*. Osborn owned two houses designed in the neoclassical style by the well-known architect Charles Bulfinch. The grand interiors of these homes, both originally built for the prominent Bostonian Harrison Gray Otis, would provide an appropriate location for this mirror to hang.

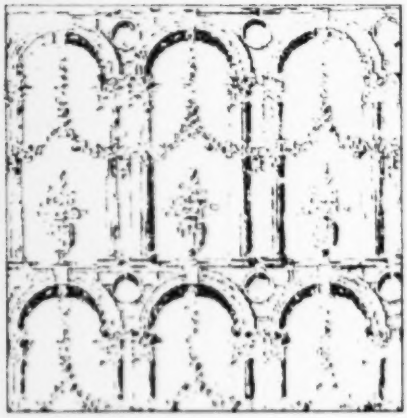
Osborn, like countless Americans of his time, sought to adopt the neoclassical style in his homes. Unlike many previous trends, neoclassicism was not just for the elite, upper classes. Many middle class citizens added Roman-inspired architectural motifs to their modest homes, and purchased objects made in the classical style. Appropriately, this reflected the new American view of society. Americans viewed social classes as being more fluid now that they no longer lived in a monarchy. The wealthy were the "first among equals," who could be emulated by others.

One of the most obvious way that Americans emulated the classical world was by copying ancient forms of government: the Greek democracy and the Roman republic. While Americans did borrow political terminology, it is safe to say that they were more drawn to the power and glory that these two ancient civilizations embodied than to the details of their governmental structures.[1] American philosophers and politicians adopted ancient notions of virtue, patriotism and beauty, and average citizens took part by bringing these new, but ancient, symbols into their homes.

[1] Richard L. Bushman, "Introduction," in Wendy Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1993), p. 16.

Neoclassical Wallpaper Sample

Designed by Joseph-Laurent Malaine (1745–1809)
Probably printed by Harmann, Risler & Cie (1795–1802)
Rixheim (Alsace), France, 1795–1802
Block-printed wove paper
Anonymous gift



Pillar and Arch Wallpaper Sample

Probably Boston, Mass., 1787–1790
Stenciled and block printed wove paper
Gift of Mrs. Henry Vaughan

Note: In order to keep these fragile wallpaper samples well preserved and protected from damaging light, only one sample will appear in the exhibition at a time. We invite educators to use the images in this packet to include both in their lessons.

As Americans embraced the neoclassical style in the early nineteenth century, they often covered the walls of their homes with wallpaper. The wealthy imported the most up-to-date styles from France. A relaxation of trade restrictions between France and the U.S. after the American Revolution made French wallpapers even more popular.

The French wallpaper sample shown here hung in the home of Philemon Russell in Charlestown, Massachusetts. The colorful design includes Medusa heads and a variety of motifs drawn from the classical vocabulary. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, artists and designers drew inspiration from the rediscoveries and excavations of two ancient Roman towns: Herculaneum and Pompeii. Visitors to the excavations published descriptions and drawings. Beautifully preserved wall paintings gave detailed views of the fashions, lifestyles and aesthetic sense of the Romans, while buildings untouched by later renovations revealed the Roman architectural style.

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The Pillar and Arch wallpaper sample, manufactured in America, is an example of a pattern that spread throughout America in the late eighteenth century. Incorporating Corinthian columns, Roman arches, swags and urns, this bold design worked well in large formal rooms and hallways.[1] Josiah Quincy and Jonathan Hamilton were two New Englanders who used similar wallpapers in their homes.[2]

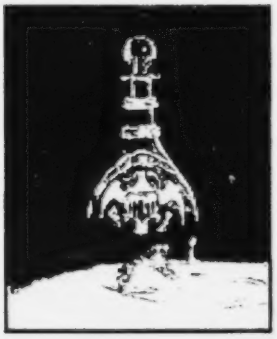
Ebenezer Clough, a Boston-area wallpaper manufacturer, or "paper stainer," described a similar wallpaper in an 1807 advertisement for his business. The design featured "a Representation of a Corinthian Column, supporting their proper Capitals and Cornice complete, in Front of a Rustic Arch, through which is seen a perspective View, a Monument supported by Liberty and Justice at the Foot of which appear the Trophies of War, and on Top of the Urn the American Eagle with drooping Wings." Clough used these neoclassical elements to memorialize a man considered to be the greatest hero of the new American republic, George Washington, whom the advertisement describes as the "best of Men."[3]

[1] See the **Classical Motifs Worksheet** for more information on these decorative elements.
[2] For more information on these homes, now owned by SPNEA, visit http://www.spnea.org/visit/homes/quincy.htm
[3] Advertisement of Ebenezer Clough, paper stainer, from Samuel Bullard's "Universal Almanack," Boston, 1807. SPNEA Archives.

More Things to Look for in the Exhibition

Pair of Decanters

Probably Ireland, ca. 1815
Blown-molded and engraved glass
Gift of Mrs. Sarah Norton McCullagh



These Irish glass decanters, bearing the initials "N.G." were probably given to Nancy Gay (1791–1873) of Maine in celebration of her marriage to Darius Norton. They are decorated with symbols of the new nation, including an eagle underneath a banner of "Liberty" on one side, and a banner with the misspelled motto "American Independance *[sic]*" on the other.

Psyche

Hiram Powers (1805–1873)
Florence, Italy 1849
Marble
Gift of Dorothy S. F. M. Codman

Greek Slave

After the sculpture by Hiram Powers (1805–1873)
Attributed to W.T. Copeland (1847–1970)
Staffordshire, England, 1852 and later
Parian porcelain
Gift of William Sumner Appleton

These sculptures by Hiram Powers date from later in the nineteenth century than the other objects in this section, but they indicate an ongoing interest in classical art in America. Originally carved in white marble, Powers's works evoke the idealized grace of ancient Greek sculpture. Powers frequently produced multiple copies of his sculptures. The life-sized bust *Psyche*, which is meant to personify the human soul, is an original that Powers copied twelve times in marble and plaster. The miniature *Greek Slave* is a porcelain copy of an extremely popular work by Powers. Although Victorian consumers were typically uncomfortable with nudity, they bought reproductions like this one in large numbers since the image spoke to an important issue in American society. Anti-slavery activists saw a message in this work, in which a Greek woman, enslaved by the Turks during the Greek War of Independence, rises above her captivity with an inner strength and calm brought on by her belief in God.

Glossary

Neoclassicism: A revival of the principles or styles embodied by the art, architecture, and literature of ancient Greece and Rome that began in the eighteenth century. The ***Classical*** style of these ancient civilizations embraced order, balance and proportion.

Medusa: This legendary monster was once a beautiful maiden but lost when she challenged the goddess Athena (goddess of wisdom and war) to a beauty contest. The goddess changed her hair into live serpents, and from that point forward, no living thing could look at Medusa without being turned to stone.

Motif: A design or symbol which may appear alone or in repetition. See the **Classical Motifs Worksheet** for examples.

Discussion Questions

1. Look at a copy of the **Classical Motifs Worksheet** at the end of this section. Identify as many motifs as possible on the Pier Mirror, wallpaper samples, and other neoclassical objects in the exhibition. How many can you find? What do the symbols mean? Why were they chosen to be represented on these objects?

2. Why do you think Americans adopted symbols of ancient Greece and Rome as they worked to create a new nation?

3. Think about the way new things are designed in 2003. (For example, think about household objects like phones, computers and televisions, as well as public buildings, houses and cars.) What do they have in common? What do we seem to value in our modern designs? How is this different from what Americans valued around the year 1800?

Activities

1. The Great Seal

Look for the **Pair of Decanters** in the exhibition. They are decorated with an eagle like the one in the Great Seal of the United States. The seal was adopted in 1782 and popularized by George Washington during his inaugural tour of the thirteen states in 1789. Americans chose the eagle as an important and powerful symbol for their new nation. In ancient Rome, the eagle had been the symbol of Jupiter, the king of the gods, and the Americans chose it to evoke the same sense of strength, self-confidence and vitality.

Have students look at an image of the Great Seal and identify as many classical motifs as possible. (It can be found on the back of a one dollar bill.) Using the internet and library to do research, ask the students to write a brief report on the symbolism of the Great Seal and its relation to ancient Rome

Questions for students

A. Why was the eagle chosen as a symbol of the new American nation? What did it symbolize in ancient Rome?
B. What does the eagle hold in each of its talons, and what covers its body? What do these objects symbolize?
C. What is the meaning of the Latin phrase the eagle holds in its mouth? Why is the message in Latin?

2. Explore your community

Look for classically inspired architecture in your community. You may refer to the **Classical Motifs Worksheet** as you identify which buildings take their designs from ancient architecture. What kind of buildings are they? Why do you think the designers of these buildings chose this style?

One of the commissioners involved with the construction of the Ohio state capitol building in 1839 wrote,

> *A state destitute of great public works...is not likely to have its institutions cherished and sustained, and its soil defended, with that zeal and tenacity which has always distinguished those regions adorned with monuments and art and architectural magnificence, to which the citizen can, at all times refer, as lasting evidence of the glory of his ancestors.*[1]

Why do you think he said this? What do you think about his statement?

[1] Quoted in Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale, *Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the U.S.A.* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 112–113.

Suggested Reading

Carlson, Laurie. *Classical Kids: An Activity Guide to Life in Ancient Greece and Rome.* Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1998. E

Cooper, Wendy. *Classical Taste in America: 1800 –1840.* New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, c. 1993. A

Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy.* Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003, pp. 216–219 (wallpaper), 224–225 (decanters), 238-239 (mirror), 318–321 (sculptures). A

Gaughenbaugh, Michael. *Old House, New House: A Child's Exploration of American Architectural Styles.* Preservation Press, 1993. M

Glenn, Patricia Brown. *Under Every Roof: A Kid's Style and Field Guide to the Architecture of American Houses.* New York: John Willey & Sons, 1993. M

Nylander, Richard, Elizabeth Redmond and Penny J. Sander. *Wallpaper in New England.* Boston: The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1986. A

Spinner, Stephanie and Susan Elizabeth Swann. *Snake Hair: The Story of Medusa.* New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1999. E

"Wallpaper in New England" website: http://www.spnea.org/wallpaper A

E Elementary school level M Middle school level A High school and adult level

Connections to National Standards for History

Grades K - 4

Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities

Standards in History
Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago
Topic 3: The History of the U.S.

Grades 5 - 12

Historical Thinking Standards
1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
4. Historical Analysis and Interpretation

U.S. History Standards
Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s)
Era 4: Expansion & Reform (1801–1861)

World History Standards
Era 3: Classical Traditions, Major Religions & Giant Empires, 1000 BCE–300 CE

Classical Motifs Worksheet

Look for these classical designs in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition and around your community.

Acanthus Leaf

Egg and Dart Pattern

Arch

Greek Key Pattern

Bust

Lion

Medusa

Classical Figures

Rope Pattern

Swag

Column

Eagle

Urn

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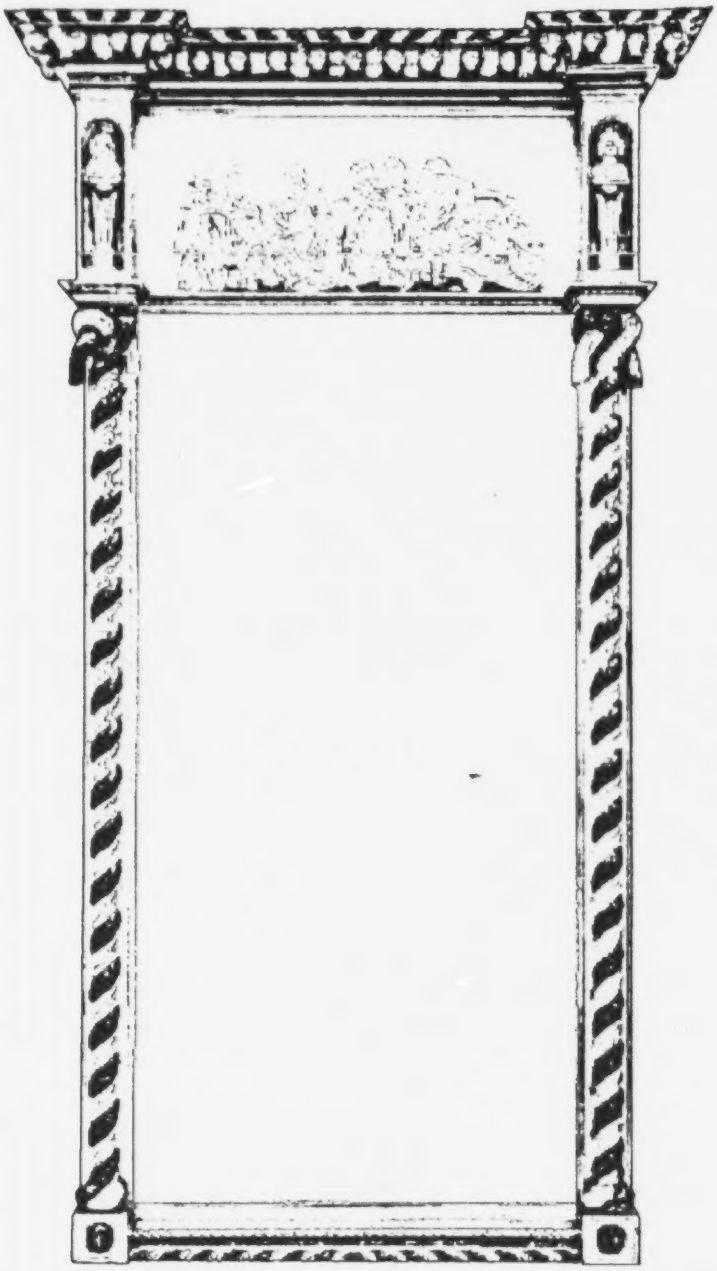

Pier Mirror
One of a pair
Probably John Doggett (1780–1857)
Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1807
White pine, gesso, gilt, paint, glass
Museum purchase with funds provided
by an anonymous gift

Neoclassical Wallpaper Sample
Designed by Joseph-Laurent Malaine (1745–1809)
Probably printed by Harmann, Risler & Cie (1795–1802)
Rixheim (Alsace), France, 1795–1802
Block-printed wove paper
Anonymous gift

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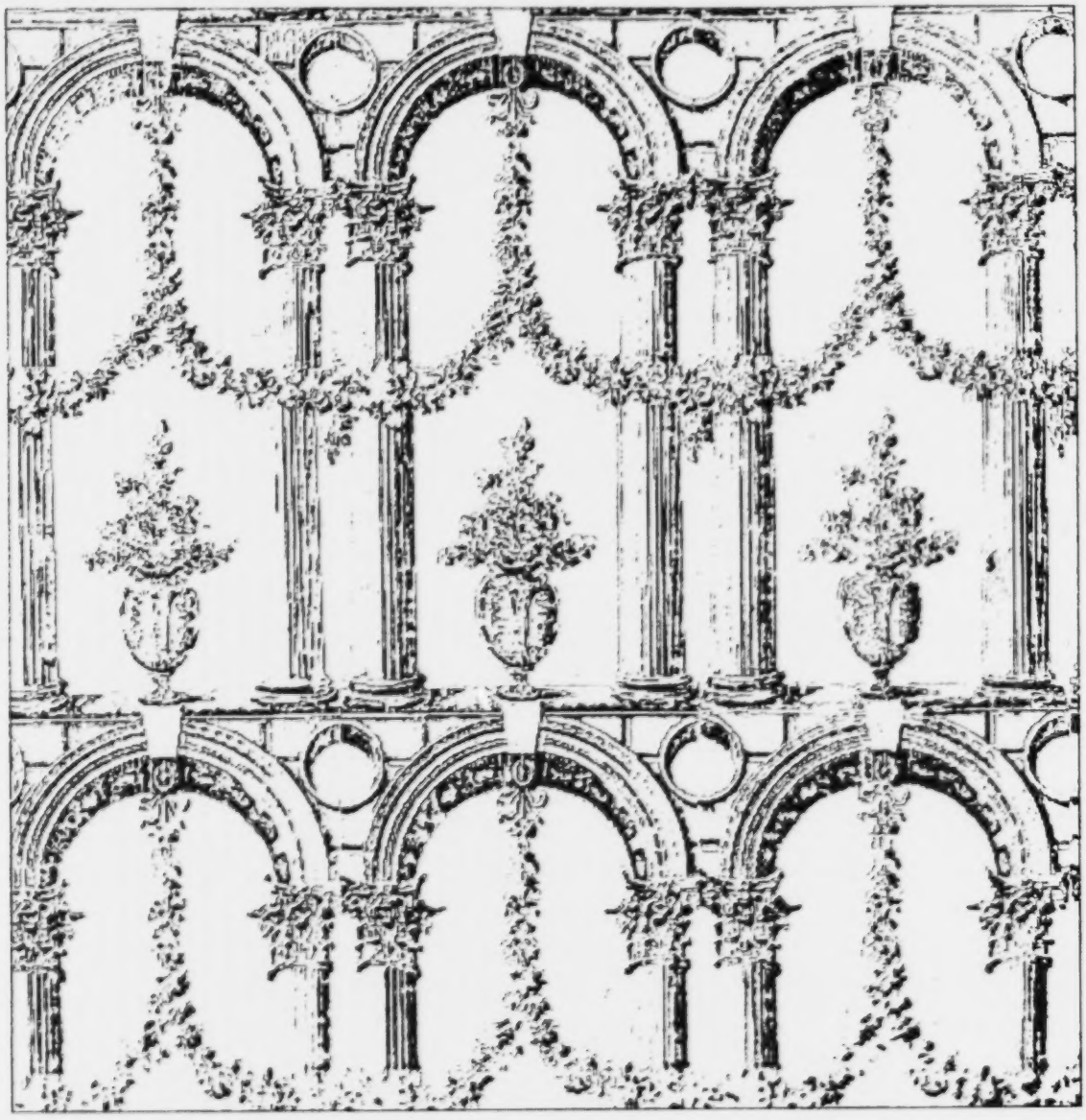

Pillar and Arch Wallpaper Sample
Probably Boston, Mass., 1787–1790
Stenciled and block printed wove paper
Gift of Mrs. Henry Vaughan

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Fighting for Freedom: Slavery and New England

What was it like to be black in America during slavery? In this section, students examine the words and images of two extraordinary young Africans living in America. The stories of Phillis Wheatley (1753–1784) and Pedro Tovookan Parris (1833–1860) span a time period when attitudes about slavery changed greatly in New England. The Wheatley family purchased Phillis as a slave in Massachusetts, prior to the Revolutionary War. Pedro Parris gained his freedom thanks to laws against trading slaves that were in place by the mid-nineteenth century. In the 1840s, he came to live in New England, where slavery was no longer legal. In the years leading up to the Civil War, outspoken New Englanders took part in the campaign to banish slavery throughout the United States. Their goals were accomplished in the 1860s, when Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and Congress abolished slavery with the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution.

Students:

- interpret historic objects that relate to slavery and abolitionism in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- analyze primary sources to gain insight into the experiences of blacks living in America during slavery.

Subject Areas	American History Art & Art History Geography Literature
Skills	Analyzing Images Using Primary Sources
Topics to Explore	Slavery & Abolitionism Race Self-Expression Propaganda

S·P·N·E·A

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Rio De Janeiro; The Raritan*; Boston, Massachusetts; Paris, Maine*

Pedro Tovookan Parris (ca. 1833–1860)
Paris, Maine, ca. 1850
Pencil, ink, watercolor on glazed linen or cotton
Library and Archives purchase

This autobiographical watercolor is a visual record of part of the long and sometimes terrifying journey that took ten-year old Pedro Tovookan Parris from his home in Africa in the mid-nineteenth century. His trip would touch three continents, transforming him from a free African to a slave and ultimately into a free man living in America.

In 1845, Pedro was kidnaped from his family in eastern Africa by a neighboring tribe. During a night attack, his terrified family scattered, and Pedro was taken away. He later recalled seeing his grandmother screaming from atop a large rock, as he and the other captives were forced to march through the night.[1]

After marching for several weeks, the captives were taken to a slave dealer on the island of Zanzibar. There, Pedro saw a white man for the first time. The man's European hat and shoes were strange to the young captives, and they were terrified that they were being sold for the purpose of being eaten. Pedro and two other boys were taken on the American ship the *Porpoise*, captained by Cyrus Libby of Scarborough, Maine.

Transporting slaves had long been illegal for Americans, and the sailors on board the *Porpoise* were horrified to learn they were participating in the illegal trade.[2] When they arrived in Rio de Janeiro, the sailors turned Libby over to the American consul.

Pedro's painting picks up at this point in the story, depicting troops marching in Rio de Janeiro at the left. The *Porpoise* was seized, and Pedro and the other boys were taken into custody and transported on the *Raritan* to Boston, where they were to testify at Libby's trial. Further along in the story, Pedro depicts the ship as it approaches the port of Boston, with the dome of the

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Massachusetts State House visible at the top of Beacon Hill. The trial of Cyrus Libby took place in Portland, Maine, in July 1845, but then was recessed for a year while the defendant arranged for witnesses to come from Brazil. Libby hoped they would prove that Pedro and the other boys were not slaves, but hired servants. One year later, he was acquitted due to insufficient evidence.

In the meantime, Pedro had gone to live with the family of Virgil D. Parris, United States Marshal for the State of Maine. The scene at the right side of his narrative represents the town of Paris, Maine, where Pedro remained with the Parris family for the rest of his life. He grew very close to the family, and apparently led a contented life, learning basic reading, writing, and math at school. He later gained renown in the town of Paris for his public speaking and ventriloquism skills. Pedro was particularly close to the Parris's youngest son Percival, who later recalled him fondly in a narrative. Percival recalled stories that Pedro told him about his childhood in Africa, and several African songs that Pedro taught him[3]

Pedro Parris (ca. 1833–1860)
Probably Boston, Mass., or Maine, ca. 1855
Sixth Plate Ambrotype

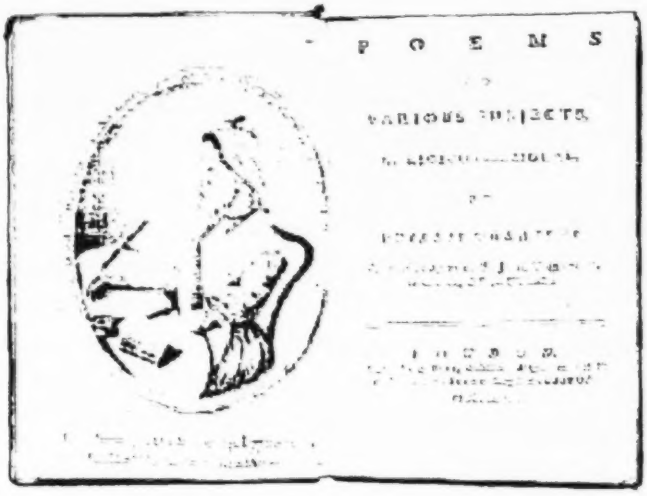
Pedro died of pneumonia at about the age of 27 on April 10, 1860. His obituary in the *Oxford Democrat* indicated that he had become an important member of the community: "Few have gone from our midst, whose loss is more generally or sincerely mourned."[4]

Although little is known about the circumstances under which Pedro drew the picture of his journey to America, it is clear that he was driven to record the narrative of his life. Perhaps, after having been forcibly separated from his family, the stories and the watercolors in some small measure served to remind Pedro who he was.

[1]Percival J. Parris, Edited by Earle G. Shettleworth. "Pedro Tovookan Parris," *Old-Time New England*, 63, no. 3 (January - March 1973), p. 62. ***Note: This article may be accessed online. See bibliography.***
[2]See the timeline included in this section for more information about anti-slavery laws.
[3]Parris, p. 61 - 64.
[4]p. 65.

Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral

Phillis Wheately (1753–1784)
London, Archibald Bell, 1773
Leather bound book
Gift of Edmund Quincy



Like Pedro Parris, Phillis Wheatley came to New England from her native Africa as a young person, and later recorded her experiences. Wheatley seems to have been born in 1753 in Senegal or Gambia. Slave traders purchased her when she was a young child, and brought her to Boston, since her small frame and frail condition did not suit her to the hard labor slaves faced in the Southern colonies or the West Indies.

In 1761, John Wheatley and his wife Susannah bought Phillis at a Boston slave auction to work as a house servant, and soon recognized her as a prodigy. Within 16 months, she had become totally fluent in English, and began to read difficult passages in the Bible and Latin and English literature. Soon she began writing poetry.

In 1773, the Wheatleys helped Phillis publish a book of poetry called *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral,* through a British publisher. The publication of her book made Wheatley the first black, the first slave, and only the second woman to publish a book in North America. Since many of her readers at the time might doubt that a black woman was capable of writing so well, a group of notable men from Boston signed a testimony to her abilities, which appeared as a preface to her book. The book was extremely popular in America and England, and Phillis gained well-known admirers including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Although many of the poems dealt with "safe" topics like religion and well-known people, Wheatley also challenged her readers to recognize the abilities of blacks, and their right to freedom. (See **Discussion Questions** below.) The Wheatley family granted Phillis her freedom shortly after the publication of her book.

SPNEA's copy of Phillis Wheatley's book belonged to Abigail Quincy in the late eighteenth century.[1] Although little is known about Mrs. Quincy's own political views, her grandson Edmund Quincy went on to become an active abolitionist. We cannot be sure, but perhaps his grandmother's volume of Wheatley's poetry had an influence on his later convictions.

[1] Abigail Quincy was the wife of Josiah Quincy II, and grandmother of siblings Edmund Quincy and Eliza Susan Quincy. See *Everyone's History Matters* to see another family artifact and to learn more about the Quincys.

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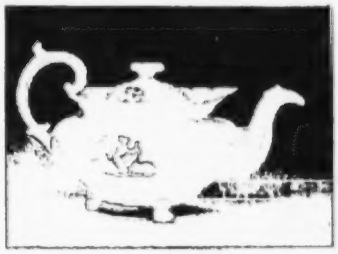
More Things to Look for in the Exhibition

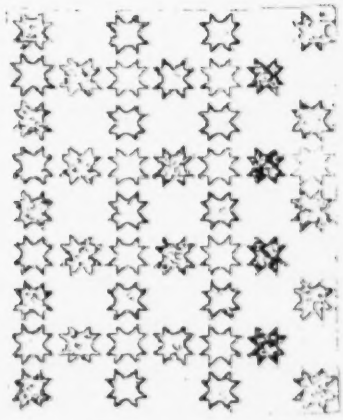
Teapot

England, 1835–1845
Porcelain
Gift of Alice and Emil Ahlborn



Cradle Quilt

Probably Boston, Massachusetts, 1836
Cotton
Gift of Mrs. Edward M. Harris
Note: The cradle quilt will not appear at all venues.



In the mid-nineteenth century, many New Englanders became involved in the campaign to abolish slavery in the United States. Objects like this teapot and quilt, both manufactured and hand made, were sold at anti-slavery fairs around the region. They served both to raise money for the abolitionist cause and to promote the anti-slavery message.

Captain Isaac Manchester (1769–1860)

Cephas Thompson (1775–1856)
Bristol, RI, 1806–1807
Oil on Canvas
Bequest of Miss Evelyn A. Munroe

Like many New England merchants, Captain Isaac Manchester was actively involved with the "Triangular Trade," which brought molasses from the West Indies to New England to be made into rum, shipped rum to Africa in exchange for slaves, and transported slaves to the West Indies to be sold. A federal law forbade American participation in the slave trade after 1808. Late in his life, Isaac Manchester lost his fortune and died in poverty.

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Glossary

Abolitionist: A reformer who campaigned to abolish slavery and make it illegal in all parts of the United States.

Propaganda: The spreading of ideas or information in order to promote a cause. (See **Activity #4.**)

Triangular Trade: A trade route that was heavily traveled in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. New England ship captains picked up molasses from sugar plantations in the West Indies, brought the molasses to New England where it was distilled and converted into rum, and exported the rum back to Africa in exchange for slaves, who were brought back for sale in the West Indies.

Discussion Questions

1. Ask students to decipher Pedro Parris's watercolor using visual clues. What are the main parts of the story? How does Parris indicate change or movement from one place to another? Note his use of colors, from dark to light.

2. Why do you think Pedro Parris felt it was so important to record his journey from Africa to Maine?

3. Who was Phillis Wheatley? Why is she important to the cause of slavery? Through what medium does she present her views? How old was she when she began expressing her true feelings?

4. Look closely at the portrait of Phillis Wheatley that is included at the front of her book. How is she represented? What does the inscription around the portrait say? Do the image and the text contradict one another? Why do you think the publishers of the book felt it was important to call her a servant?

5. Compare and contrast Phillis's and Pedro's stories. What experiences did they have in common, and what experiences were different? Why? How did their experiences shape who they were as people?

Activities

1. **Visual Narrative**

Like Pedro Parris, create your own visual narrative. Choose a story from your life that demonstrates a change in location, status, or attitude, and represent it with images. Using a long piece of paper (or several sheets of paper attached to one another), draw a series of images to show how you got from one place to another. Think about how you can make your journey clear enough to the viewer that he or she does not need words to understand what is going on.

OR

Using Phillis Wheatley's life story, and the visual narrative ideas of Pedro Parris, create a visual narrative of Wheatley's life.

2. **Geography**

On a world map, locate the regions in Africa where Phillis and Pedro are thought to have been born. Identify the routes that they traveled to get to America. With what land masses and bodies of water did they come in contact? Discuss the length of the voyage and conditions that slaves endured during their journeys to the New World.

3. **Timeline**

How do the people and objects discussed in this section fit into the history of slavery in the American Colonies, and later the United States? Create a timeline of events that place them in context, using the chronology below as a starting point. Add as many of the following as possible, and others that you think of: world exploration, beginning of the slave trade, introduction of slavery to North America, Triangular Trade, colonial, state and Federal laws about slavery, Revolutionary War, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Three-fifths compromise, economic trends in the North and South, Missouri Compromise, Amistad incident, Lincoln-Douglas debates, Civil War, Emancipation Proclamation, 13th Amendment of the Constitution.

1761	John Wheatley purchases eight-year-old Phillis Wheatley at a slave auction in Boston to be his wife's companion.
1773	Phillis Wheatley publishes *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. The Wheatley family grants her freedom.
1778	Phillis Wheatley marries John Peters, a free, black Bostonian. She dies six years later in poverty.
1790s	Captain Isaac Manchester of Bristol, R.I. profits greatly from the Triangular Trade.
1836	The third annual Anti-Slavery Fair takes place in Boston, organized by the Female Anti-Slavery society. A cradle quilt decorated with a poem appealing to young mothers, is one of many pieces sold to promote support for the abolitionist cause.
1845	Pedro Tovookan Parris arrives in Maine, a free state.
1860	Pedro Parris dies of pneumonia.

4. Reading Wheatley's Poetry

Phillis Wheatley's poetry reveals the complex nature of her position as a young person from Africa living in the American colonies. Many of her poems reveal the profound influence of the Christian faith, which she was taught by the European Americans with whom she lived.

In one poem, she even goes so far as to celebrate her escape from the barbarism of impious Africa:

> *'Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,*
> *Taught my benighted soul to understand*
> *That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too:*
> *Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.*
> *Some view our sable race with scornful eye,*
> *"Their colour is a diabolic die."*
> *Remember, Christians, Negroes, black as Cain,*
> *May be refin'd and join th'angelic train.*
>
> – "On Being Brought from Africa to America"

But as the last lines of the poem above assert, Wheatley felt that blacks could live as equals to whites. In "To S.M. A Young African Painter, On Seeing his Works," she seems to extol the talents of Scipio Moorehead, another enslaved African living in Boston. The portrait of Phillis on the frontispiece of her book is thought to be based on his painting.

In a poem dedicated to the Earl of Dartmouth, Wheatley criticizes slavery:

> *Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,*
> *Wonder from whence my love of* Freedom *sprung,*
> *Whence flow these wishes for the common good,*
> *By feeling hears alone best understood,*
> *I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate*
> *Was snatched from* Afric's *fancy'd happy seat:*
> *What pangs excruciating must molest,*
> *What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?*
>
> –"To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth"

The two poems quoted above are reprinted for students at the end of this section. For other poems, get a copy of Wheatley's book, or look up her work on the internet. (Several sites provide the text of her book for free.) Which poems demonstrate her opposition to slavery? Which seem to go along with the customs and teachings of white society in America at the time? Discuss the ways in which Wheatley's poetry reflects the time and place in which she lived.

3. **Research Project.** Research other African Americans who expressed their feelings about slavery, such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, and Sojourner Truth.

4. **Create your own Propaganda.** The Abolitionists put their message on all kinds of everyday objects using words and images. The teapot and quilt above are two examples. The teapot was made by Wedgwood, a factory whose goods were popular with middle-class consumers, the same audience towards which abolitionists directed thier propaganda. A poem that decorates the quilt appeals to young mothers to compare young slave children to their own.

Discuss **propaganda** and the different forms that it can take. Here are five popular techniques used by contemporary advertisers:

> a. **Bandwagon** - persuades people that others are doing or thinking something and they should too.
> b. **Testimonial** - uses the words of a famous person to persuade.
> c. **Transfer** - uses the names or pictures of famous people, but not direct quotations to convey a message not necessarily associated with them.
> d. **Repetition** - repeats the product name or message at least four times.
> e. **Appeal to Emotion** - uses words that will make people feel strongly about someone or something.

Into what categories do the abolitionists' propaganda fit?

Choose a cause that is important to you, such as the environment or human rights. Design an object that would appeal to your audience and promote your message in a visual way.

Suggested Reading

Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy*. Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003, pp. 142–143 (Phillis Wheatley), 384–409 (The section titled "Slavery" refers to many objects discussed here). (A)

Kaplan, Sidney. *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution.* Washington, D.C.: New York Graphic Society, Ltd., in association with the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1973. (A)

Lasky, Kathryn. *A Voice of Her Own: The Story of Phillis Wheatley, Slave Poet.* Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2003. (E) (M)

Parris, Percival J. Edited by Earle G. Shettleworth. "Pedro Tovookan Parris," *Old-Time New England*, 63, no. 3 (January - March 1973), 60 - 68. ***NOTE: You may access this article online at http://www.spnea.org/resources/articles/pdf202.pdf .*** (A)

Rinaldi, Ann. *Hang a Thousand Trees with Ribbons: The Story of Phillis Wheatley.* Gulliver Books Paperbacks, 1996. (M)

Wheatley, Phillis. *Complete Writings.* ed. Vincent Caretta. New York: Penguin Classics, 2001. (M) (A)

Thomas, Velma Maia. *No Man Can Hinder Me: The Journey from Slavery to Emancipation Through Song.* New York: Crown Publishers, 2001. (A)

(E) Elementary school level (M) Middle school level (A) High school and adult level

Connections to National Standards for History

Grades K - 4

Historical Thinking Standards

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Comprehension
4. Historical Research

Standards in History

Topic 3: The History of the United States

Grades 5 - 12

Historical Thinking Standards

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Comprehension
4. Historical Analysis and Interpretation

U. S. History Standards

Era 1: Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings to 1620)
Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585–1763)
Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s)
Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–1861)

Two Poems by Phillis Wheatley

On Being Brought from Africa to America

'TWAS mercy brought me from my *Pagan* land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:
Once I redemption neither fought nor knew,
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
"Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, *Christians*, *Negroes*, black as *Cain*,
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

From *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, London: A. Bell Bookseller, 1773, p. 18.

To the Right Honourable WILLIAM, Earl of DARTMOUTH, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for North-America, &c.

HAIL, happy day, when, smiling like the morn,
Fair *Freedom* rose *New-England* to adorn:
The northern clime beneath her genial ray,
Dartmouth, congratulates thy blissful sway:
Elate with hope her race no longer mourns,
Each soul expands, each grateful bosom burns,
While in thine hand with pleasure we behold
The silken reins, and *Freedom*'s charms unfold.
Long lost to realms beneath the northern skies
She shines supreme, while hated *faction* dies:
Soon as appear'd the *Goddess* long desir'd,
Sick at the view, she languish'd and expir'd;
Thus from the splendors of the morning light
The owl in sadness seeks the caves of night.

No more, *America*, in mournful strain
Of wrongs, and grievance unredress'd complain,
No longer shalt thou dread the iron chain,
Which wanton *Tyranny* with lawless hand
Had made, and with it meant t'enslave the land.

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of *Freedom* sprung,
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from *Afric*'s fancy'd happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?

Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd
That from a father seiz'd his babe belov'd:
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

For favours past, great Sir, our thanks are due,
And thee we ask thy favours to renew,
Since in thy pow'r, as in thy will before,
To sooth the griefs, which thou did'st once deplore.
May heav'nly grace the sacred sanction give
To all thy works, and thou for ever live
Not only on the wings of fleeting *Fame*,
Though praise immortal crowns the patriot's name,
But to conduct to heav'ns refulgent fane,
May fiery coursers sweep th' ethereal plain,
And bear thee upwards to that blest abode,
Where, like the prophet, thou shalt find thy God.

From *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, London: A. Bell Bookseller, 1773, pp. 73 - 75.

Rio De Janeiro;
The* Raritan*; Boston, Massachusetts;
Paris, Maine
Pedro Tovookan Parris (ca. 1833–1860)
Paris, Maine, ca. 1850
Pencil, ink, watercolor on glazed linen or cotton
Library and Archives Purchase

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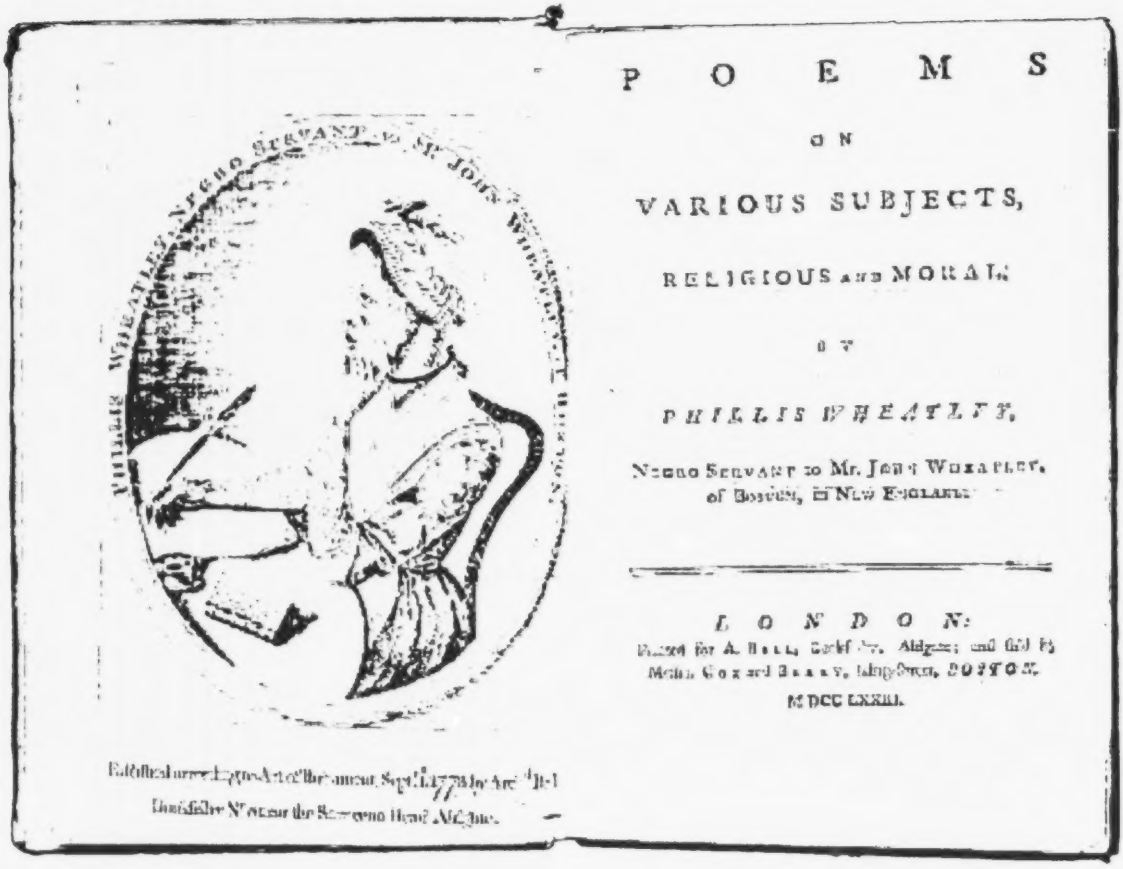

Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral
Phillis Wheatley (1753–1784)
London, Archibald Bell, 1773
Leather bound book
Gift of Edmund Quincy

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People & Portraits

Portraits can provide us with great insight into the lives of people of the past. Not only do they allow the viewer to see the face of someone who lived hundreds of years ago, they often provide information about the environment in which people lived, the objects with which they chose to associate themselves, the clothes they wore, and the body language and facial expressions they used to portray themselves to the world. The fact that someone even had the means or the social status to have a portrait made might tell us about his or her lifestyle. Each of these aspects of portraiture gives us a glimpse into who these people were as individuals, and how they chose to be remembered by society at large.

In this section, students look at the wide range of people represented in portraits in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition.

Students:

- interpret portraits from several periods in history.
- draw conclusions about the time and place in which portraits were made by analyzing visual clues.

Subject Areas	American History
	Art & Art History
Skills	Analyzing Images
Topics to Explore	Representation of Self
	Material Consumption
	Changing Technology

S·P·N·E·A

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Richard Codman (1762–1806)

John Singleton Copley
London, 1793
Oil on Canvas
Bequest of Dorothy S. F. M. Codman

In 1794, the Codman family of the Boston area received a shipment of artwork from abroad, including this portrait of Richard Codman by the famous artist, John Singleton Copley. In the painting, Codman sits in a fine chair in front of a silk damask curtain. He wears the waistcoat and cravat of a gentleman, his hair covered with a wig in the fashionable style of the day. In his hands, he holds a letter, indicating that he is literate and educated, and to his left stands a sculpture on a pedestal. This must make reference to Codman's known love of fine art. In fact, Codman was a bit of a black sheep in his family. While he was known for his wit and charm, he was described by later generations as being "fond of society, careless in money matters, but with a nice taste in pictures and statuary."[1] His family encouraged him to return from a tour of Europe in 1802, after it seemed he would squander the family fortune on art work and chateaux while he was there. Naturally, since Richard Codman commissioned the portrait himself, this aspect of his personality is not represented in the image.

John Singleton Copley was America's most prominent artist in the years leading up to the American Revolution. He was well known as a portraitist, and painted members of many of the prominent families in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. One of his best known works portrays patriot and silversmith, Paul Revere.[2] When Copley moved to London in 1774, he took up history painting. Considered a higher form of art than portraiture, history painting dealt in subjects drawn from the ancient and more recent past, focusing on grand scenes of battle or literary subjects. While he was gaining even greater acclaim in London for this kind of work, he painted Richard Codman's portrait. Copley continued to make most of his income by painting portraits of visiting Americans, English military leaders, and members of the gentry.

[1] Cora Codman Wollcott, *The Codmans in Charlestown and Boston, 1637 - 1929.* (Brookline, Mass.: by the author, 1930), 15.
[2] This painting is now in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. One of the most famous portraits of an American tradesman, it provides an interesting comparison to *Portrait of an Upholsterer,* below.

Portrait of an Upholsterer

Franciscus Cuypers (1820–1866)
Boston, Massachusetts, 1852
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase

A striking contrast to the portrait of Richard Codman, this unusual portrait depicts a working-class man who is also from the Boston area, about 60 years later. Most painted portraits from this time period represent upper class people who could afford to pay an artist a commission.[1] Unlike Codman, who wears his finest clothes, this unknown upholsterer wears a rough smock and displays the tools of his trade in his hands. In his left hand he holds a tack hammer that he would use to fasten down the red silk damask fabric cover on the chair. A circular needle and shears are held by a strip of leather on the wall behind him. Another tool that hangs there might have been used to arrange the upholstery stuffing.

Many skilled workmen like this lived and worked in the major cities of America. Although manufacturing technology was improving by this time, many household items were built and assembled using age-old techniques. One theory about how this painting came to be suggests that the man began as a journeyman upholsterer who, by the time the portrait was painted, had come to own his own large and profitable upholstery firm.[2] His success would make it possible for him to pay for a portrait like this, that commemorated his early years.

Franciscus Cuypers was a Dutch painter who seems to have come to America by 1848. He lived in the New York area, and may have made an unrecorded visit to Boston to paint this portrait.

[1] See footnote 2 on the previous page.
[2] Nancy Carlisle, *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy* (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003), 298.

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More Things to Look for in the Exhibition

A number of other portraits appear in the *Cherished Possessions* exhibition. Look for these and others, and compare them with the portraits discussed above.

Portraits of the McArthur Family

Royall Brewster Smith (1801–1855)
Limington, Maine, 1836
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Bertram K. And Nina Fletcher Little

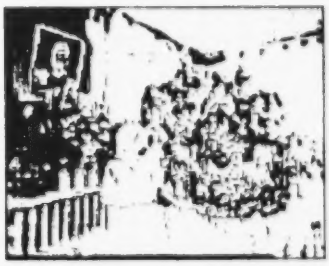
Catherine McArthur

Sara Norton

Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1898)
Oil on Canvas
London, 1884
Bequest of Susan Norton

Edward T. Cassell

Elwood G. Merrill
Salem, Massachusetts, 1907
Gelatin Silver Print
Gift of Miss Mary Frye



Margaret (LaFata) Giacalone with Her Household Altar Honoring St. Joseph

Dana Salvo (b. 1952)
Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1996
Dye Coupler print
Gift of the artist

(While this may or may not portray a real person, it is fun to look at nonetheless!)

Dummy Board "*Phyllis*"

Probably Boston, Massachusetts, 1740–1750
Oil on American larch
Gift of Elizabeth Beasom Stephan

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Glossary

Cravat: A band or scarf worn around the neck, often made of lace or silk. Cravats were popular among wealthy men of the eighteenth century.

Commission: An agreement by which an artist is hired and paid to create a work of art.

Gentry: The upper or ruling class.

Journeyman: A worker who has learned a trade and works for someone else, usually by the day.

Discussion Questions

1. What is a portrait? What makes a portrait different from other types of artwork?

2. Why do people make portraits? What purposes do they serve?

3. Who traditionally had portraits made for themselves in the early years of America? Whom did they hire to make the portraits? What kind of materials did the artists use?

4. Photography was invented in the mid-nineteenth century. What impact do you think it had on ideas about portraits and who had them done?

5. How else have society's ideas about portraiture changed over time? Are our notions about who gets their portraits done different than they were 200 years ago? What has caused this?

*(Note: for more discussion questions about portraits, see the **Portrait Activity Worksheet** below.)*

Activities

1. **Gallery Activity**. Give students a copy of the **Portrait Activity Worksheet** that appears on the next page. Ask them to choose a portrait in the exhibition that interests them. Have students analyze the portrait visually without reading the label by answering the questions.

After students have completed the questions, gather them together and ask each to report what he or she has learned to the class.

2. **Create a self-portrait**. After students have explored the variety of objects, symbols, and backgrounds that artists of the past have included in portraits, ask them to think about how they would want themselves portrayed. What objects should be included? What should the setting be? What facial expressions would best convey his or her personality? Should the portrait be formal or informal? What clothing would be appropriate? Where will the portrait be displayed?

Once they have answered these questions for themselves, ask students to create a self portrait using the artistic medium of their choice.

3. **Family Photo Activity.** Have each student bring in the oldest photograph they can find of one or several members of their family. Ask each student to answer the six questions below with the help of a family member

1. Who are the people in this picture?
2. What is their relation to me?
3. When was the picture taken?
4. Where was the picture taken?
5. Why was the picture taken?
6. Is there anything else you know about this picture?

Ask students to present their photographs and answers to the class. Have students learned anything new about their families by engaging in this activity? What have they learned about each other that they did not know before?

Suggested Reading

Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy*. Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003, pp. 36–61 ("New England People,") 122–25 (*Phyllis*), 298–99 (*Portrait of an Upholsterer*). A

Flexner, James. *John Singleton Copley.* New York: Fordham University Press, 1993. A

King, Penny and Claire Roundhill. *Portraits*. New York: Crabtree Publishers, 1996. E

Richardson, Joy. *Looking at Faces in Art.* Milwaukee, Wisc.: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 2002. E

Wilkinson, Phillip and Alison Cole. *The Art Gallery: Faces*. New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 2000. M

E Elementary school level M Middle school level A High school and adult level

Connections to National Standards for History

<u>Grades K - 4</u>
Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities

Standards in History
Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago
Topic 3: The History of the United States

<u>Grades 5 - 12</u>
Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
4. Historical Analysis and Interpretation

U.S. History Standards
Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s)
Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801–1861)
Note: Portraits in the exhibition span a range of time periods.

Portrait Activity Worksheet

Instructions:
Choose a portrait in the exhibition that catches your interest. Do not read the label until you have answered the questions below. See if you can understand the portrait based on visual clues alone.

1. What is your first impression of this person? List some words that pop into your head to describe him or her.

2. **Clothes** can be a useful clue. What kind of clothing is this person wearing?

3. Look at the person's **body language**. How is the person posed in the portrait?

4. **Objects** are usually included in artworks intentionally. Are there any objects included in this portrait? What are they?

5. Is there anything in the **background** of your portrait that could be a clue? What is it?

6. Do the clues add up? Do they help you to understand who this person is? Imagine where this person lives, what he or she does for a living, and what his or her life is like. Write down your ideas in several sentences.

7. Where do you think this portrait is meant to be hung? Who would have seen it?

8. If this portrait has a message, what do you think it is? (For example, "This person is very wealthy"; "This man is strong and powerful"; etc.)

9. Now look at the label beside the artwork. Fill in as much of the information below as possible:

Name of the artwork:

Artist's name:

How old is this artwork?

Where is it from?

Were some of your guesses about this portrait correct? Which ones?

Richard Codman (1762 –1806)
John Singleton Copley
London, 1793
Oil on Canvas
Bequest of Dorothy S. F. M. Codman

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Portrait of an Upholsterer
Franciscus Cuypers (1820 –1866)
Boston, Massachusetts, 1852
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase

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